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Contact: Jennifer Pickett
(804) 786-7432
Jennifer.Pickett@drpt.virginia.gov

Rail Access Helps Keep Flour Mill in Virginia
Roanoke County facility will provide more than \$8 million
in local investment and support local jobs

RICHMOND, Va., May 18, 2006 – The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has received approval to fund a rail connection for The Mennel Milling Company's new facility in Roanoke County. The Commonwealth Transportation Board authorized DRPT to provide \$450,000 through the Rail Industrial Access program.

Access to rail shipping was a key factor in the decision to keep Mennel's operations in Virginia. "This project emphasizes the importance of competitive shipping options for business. Rail provides faster, cheaper shipping over long distances. Just one railcar has the equivalent capacity of four trucks," said Kevin Page, manager of rail development programs at DRPT.

Approximately 2,712 feet of track will be constructed to connect Mennel's planned facility to a Norfolk Southern rail line in Starkey, VA. The new facility will retain or create 33 jobs in the area.

Mennel Milling Company provides flour for numerous commercial bakeries, supporting a variety of products such as Little Debbie® snack cakes and frozen bread for grocery stores.

The total project cost related to this grant is \$600,000, with \$450,000 provided by DRPT and \$150,000 in local match from Mennel Milling Co. The project will be completed within 24 months, and has been coordinated with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

About DRPT

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is the state agency responsible for rail and public transportation in Virginia. One of six agencies that report to the Secretary of Transportation, DRPT facilitates the movement of people and goods throughout Virginia with three main areas of activity- rail, public transportation and commuter services. We help people and businesses find the smartest distance between two points. Visit us at www.drpt.virginia.gov.

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